

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

March 27, 2020

The Honorable Roy Blunt
Chairman
Subcommittee of Labor, HHS, Education and
and Related Agencies
U.S. Senate Appropriations Committee
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Patty Murray
Ranking Member
Subcommittee of Labor, HHS, Education
and Related Agencies
U.S. Senate Appropriations Committee
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Blunt and Ranking Member Murray:

As the Subcommittee begins its consideration of the fiscal year (FY) 2021 Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education Appropriations bill, we urge the Subcommittee to maintain the Senate's robust investment in supporting a safe, healthy, and well-rounded education for all students. The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), signed into law on December 10, 2015, included a \$1.6 billion authorization level for the Student Support and Academic Enrichment Grant program (Title IV, Part A). Since FY18, Congress has provided more than \$1 billion every fiscal year for this program, with a most recent investment of \$1.21 billion for fiscal year 2020. This sustained investment has helped schools districts as they strive to meet the comprehensive needs of our nation's students. We are grateful for this history of strong support and urge you to maintain robust funding for this program, as was intended when it was first authorized.

The data are clear that to best support the academic success of our children, they must feel secure, supported and engaged in their school environment. Assisting states in making meaningful updates in technology, increasing opportunities to provide a well-rounded education, providing funds for mental health professionals and implementing locally-tailored programs to reduce the use of exclusionary discipline practices are just a few of the activities supported under this grant program. As a formula-based program focused on the flexible, locally-determined use of funds, the Student Support and Academic Enrichment Grant is well suited to ensuring that a large number of districts have resources they can direct in a manner that best addresses their particular needs.

We have all heard from parents, educators, and students in our states who understand that students need access to a comprehensive education to compete successfully in the 21st Century global marketplace. For example, some districts have opted to spend these funds on programs that emphasize positive behavioral interventions and supports, while other districts have directed funds to develop safe and supportive learning environments. These examples go to show that the programs covered under the Student Support and Academic Enrichment Grant program support the principle that a well-rounded curriculum should never be a luxury reserved for some, but a necessity available to all.

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We are grateful for the significant resources dedicated to the Student Support and Academic Enrichment Grant program in FY20, and we appreciate your ongoing commitment to elementary and secondary education. We ask that you continue to support our children by providing the strongest possible funding for this program, building on the FY20 enacted level, in the FY21 Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education Appropriations bill. Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

/s/ Cory A. Booker

Cory A. Booker
United States Senator

/s/ Susan M. Collins

Susan M. Collins
United States Senator

/s/ Tammy Baldwin

Tammy Baldwin
United States Senator

/s/ Tina Smith

Tina Smith
United States Senator

/s/ Christopher S. Murphy

Christopher S. Murphy
United States Senator

/s/ Doug Jones

Doug Jones
United States Senator

/s/ Sherrod Brown

Sherrod Brown
United States Senator

/s/ Angus S. King, Jr.

Angus S. King, Jr.
United States Senator

/s/ Robert P. Casey, Jr.

Robert P. Casey, Jr.
United States Senator

/s/ Tim Kaine

Tim Kaine
United States Senator

/s/ Thomas R. Carper

Thomas R. Carper
United States Senator

/s/ Maria Cantwell

Maria Cantwell
United States Senator

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/s/ Jeanne Shaheen

Jeanne Shaheen
United States Senator

/s/ Richard Blumenthal

Richard Blumenthal
United States Senator

/s/ Jack Reed

Jack Reed
United States Senator

/s/ Jon Tester

Jon Tester
United States Senator

/s/ Catherine Cortez Masto

Catherine Cortez Masto
United States Senator

/s/ Debbie Stabenow

Debbie Stabenow
United States Senator

/s/ Tammy Duckworth

Tammy Duckworth
United States Senator

/s/ Dianne Feinstein

Dianne Feinstein
United States Senator

/s/ Joe Manchin III

Joe Manchin III
United States Senator

/s/ Sheldon Whitehouse

Sheldon Whitehouse
United States Senator

/s/ Margaret Wood Hassan

Margaret Wood Hassan
United States Senator

/s/ Edward J. Markey

Edward J. Markey
United States Senator

/s/ Jacky Rosen

Jacky Rosen
United States Senator

/s/ Brian Schatz

Brian Schatz
United States Senator

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/s/ Kirsten Gillibrand
Kirsten Gillibrand
United States Senator

/s/ Jeffrey A. Merkley
Jeffrey A. Merkley
United States Senator

/s/ Michael F. Bennet
Michael F. Bennet
United States Senator

/s/ Gary C. Peters
Gary C. Peters
United States Senator

/s/ Benjamin L. Cardin
Benjamin L. Cardin
United States Senator

/s/ Bernard Sanders
Bernard Sanders
United States Senator

/s/ Elizabeth Warren
Elizabeth Warren
United States Senator

/s/ Amy Klobuchar
Amy Klobuchar
United States Senator

/s/ Christopher A. Coons
Christopher A. Coons
United States Senator

/s/ Chris Van Hollen
Chris Van Hollen
United States Senator

/s/ Mark R. Warner
Mark R. Warner
United States Senator

/s/ Mazie Hirono
Mazie K. Hirono
United States Senator

/s/ Kyrsten Sinema
Kyrsten Sinema
United States Senator

/s/ Kamala D. Harris
Kamala D. Harris
United States Senator

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/s/ Richard J. Durbin
Richard J. Durbin
United States Senator

/s/ Robert Menendez
Robert Menendez
United States Senator